IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A method for producing a catalyst having a composition represented by the following formula (1) for use in producing methacrylic acid through gas-phase catalytic oxidation of methacrolein with molecular oxygen, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

(i) preparing a solution or slurry ~~containing~~ comprising at least molybdenum, phosphorus, and vanadium (liquid I);

(ii) preparing a solution or slurry containing ammonium radical (liquid II);

(iii) preparing a mixture of the liquid I and the liquid II by:

introducing ~~one liquid (liquid PR) of~~ one of the liquid I and the liquid II (liquid PR) into a tank (tank A), ~~and~~

subsequently pouring the other ~~liquid~~ of the liquid I and the liquid II (liquid LA) into the tank already containing the liquid PR,

~~on a~~ the liquid LA is poured into the tank A so that when the liquid LA contacts the liquid PR the contact occurs at a continuous region ~~in the~~ on a surface of the liquid PR, and

the continuous region ~~occupying~~ comprises 0.01 to 10% of ~~the whole~~ an entire surface area of ~~the surface of~~ the liquid PR in the tank A; and

(iv) drying and calcining the resultant solution or slurry containing a catalyst precursor comprising all the catalyst constituents,

$$P_a Mo_b V_c Cu_d X_e Y_f Z_g O_h \quad (1)$$

wherein:

P, Mo, V, Cu and O represent phosphorous, molybdenum, vanadium, copper and oxygen, respectively;

X represents at least one element selected from the group consisting of antimony, bismuth, arsenic, germanium, zirconium, tellurium, silver, selenium, silicon, tungsten and boron;

Y represents at least one element selected from the group consisting of iron, zinc, chromium, magnesium, tantalum, cobalt, manganese, barium, gallium, cerium and lanthanum;

Z represents at least one element selected from the group consisting of potassium, rubidium and cesium; ~~and~~

subscripts a, b, c, d, e, f, g and h represent an atomic ratio of each element, respectively; and

when b is 12, a is in the range of from 0.5 to 3, c is in the range of from 0.01 to 3, d is in the range of from 0.01 to 2, e is in the range of from 0 to 3, f is in the range of from 0 to 3, g is in the range of from 0.01 to 3 and h represents the atomic ratio of oxygen necessary for fulfilling the requirement of the valence of each element above.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The method ~~for producing the catalyst for use in producing methacrylic acid~~ according to claim 1, wherein the liquid LA is poured while stirring the liquid PR introduced into the tank A with a stirring power of 0.01 to 3.5 kW/m^3.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The method ~~for producing the catalyst for use in producing methacrylic acid~~ according to claim 1, wherein the liquid LA is poured from ~~the~~ a height of 0.05 to 2 m above the surface of the liquid PR introduced into the tank A.

Claim 4 (Withdrawn): A catalyst produced by the method according to claim 1.

Claim 5 (Withdrawn): A catalyst produced by the method according to claim 2.

Claim 6 (Withdrawn): A catalyst produced by the method according to claim 3.

Claim 7 (Withdrawn): A method for producing methacrylic acid through gas-phase catalytic oxidation of methacrolein with molecular oxygen in the presence of the catalyst according to claim 4.

Claim 8 (Withdrawn): A method for producing methacrylic acid through gas-phase catalytic oxidation of methacrolein with molecular oxygen in the presence of the catalyst according to claim 5.

Claim 9 (Withdrawn): A method for producing methacrylic acid through gas-phase catalytic oxidation of methacrolein with molecular oxygen in the presence of the catalyst according to claim 6.